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THE CEA CRITIC

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INCREASING ADVANCED ENROLLMENT IN ENGLISH

In the fall of 1952 enrollment in advanced undergraduate courses in English at North Texas State College fell to a twenty-year low (excluding the war years) of 175. This enrollment, in thirteen sections, was from a total college enrollment of 4,449. The average of thirteen per section was also the lowest average per section during the postwar years. For that matter, even in the boom year of 1950-51 fall enrollment in advanced courses had totaled only 246 as against a college enrollment of more than 5,000. Without going into the details of legal and internal administrative requirements, it suffices to say that the English Department was faced with a sharp curtailment of advanced offerings, unless the long downward trend in advanced English enrollments could be halted.

North Texas State College, which was a state teachers college until its reorganization in 1944, still has a responsibility for preparing high school teachers of English. Its discharge of that responsibility had therefore reached a very low level in 1952. During the entire regular session the enrollment in the departmental course in methods of teaching English totaled twelve, and the subsequent summer enrollment was only fifteen. Since this course is the usual pre-requisite for practice teaching in English, we were turning out, less losses from marriage and other causes, not more than twenty-seven English teachers during that school year.

This disturbingly low number came in the face of a 1951 study by the writer which showed that more than twenty per cent of high school English teachers in

(Please turn to page 5)

The Humanities Center And The CEA

On June 27, 1957, the Board of Directors of the College English Association voted permission to the Humanities Center for Liberal Education in an Industrial Society to organize as an independent entity.

The Board felt that this agency, which began in 1952 as the CEA Institute, had more than fulfilled its function as an arm of CEA. It was organized to call attention to the situation in which teachers of college English found themselves at the moment when postwar enrollments were ending. The climate of opinion was unfavorable for the humanities vis-a-vis the natural and social sciences.

Through the several institutes in 1952 and 1953, culminating at Corning, national attention was drawn to the problem. Industry endorsed the assertion that English majors are important to the economic life of the nation.

At the same time the scope of the institutes was broadened to undergird all humanistic studies. Although the work in language and literature remains of central importance in this larger view, and to a degree the centrality of CEA might be maintained in the Center, the operations of the Center can best be furthered by its independent status. CEA will continue to support the aims of the Center and to participate in its programs in appropriate ways.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Institute and the Humanities Center as an activity of CEA. For the first time a national professional association effectively called attention to an imbalance in collegiate education and to a large degree secured corrective measures.

Second, favorable public attitudes toward the study of the English language and the literature written in that language were created.

Third, CEA achieved status in the national councils of educators; the officers of CEA were called upon by private and government agencies to participate, as committee members or advisers, on matters of great importance.

Fourth, many members of CEA were given opportunities to broaden their contacts and thus to widen their usefulness.

If one of the unstated goals of an Association is to help lift its members into positions of influence, then this Institute-Center activity of CEA has quite amply succeeded.

Finally, CEA has benefited internally from the Institute-Center operations. Services which had not been available to members before 1952 became possible; these included visits by national officers to regional associations, enlarged national-office activities, expanded publications, and that intangible thing called a sense of well-being. It is with regret, therefore, that the Board says farewell to this offspring of CEA. But like any grown-up child it is ready to go forth alone with parental blessing.

Harry R. Warfel
President, CEA

SOUND AND SENSE IN FAULKNER'S PROSE

In his by now famous review of Faulkner's **Intruder in the Dust** in **The New Yorker,** Edmund Wilson referred to Faulkner's frequent mechnical lapses in his later work as the "casualties of an indolent taste and a negligent workmanship." Describing Faulkner's complex prose, Wilson wrote that "he really belongs . . . to the full-dress post-Flaubert group of Conrad, Joyce, and Proust . . . ," but, added Wilson, he has not "mastered . . the discipline of the Joyces, Prousts, and Conrads." Mr. Wilson thus set the theme for similar criticism of Faulkner's prose manner.

It seems to me that Mr. Wilson erred in so classing Faulkner, especially since it led so inevitably to finding him deficient in exactly those matters of style in which Conrad, Joyce, and Proust excelled. Their stylistic successes are on the whole irrelevant as criteria for assessing Faulkner. Whatever affinities Faulkner may have with this great trio, he lacks intellectuality, the control, which so heavily mark their work in both subject and manner. It is impossible to imagine Faulkner sustaining the learned juggling of **Ulysses** (one of the problems of **Absalom, Absalom!** for the critic is that its structural scheme is not so neat as that of Joyce's); or pursuing a moral issue with the relentless, unceasing brooding of Conrad; or exploring the thinly subtle overtones of memory along lines of purest, Proustian thought.

If we consider Faulkner's prose in relation to its attempt and achievement — which is surely the only meaningful way of responding to any writer's work — we will find it in no way inadequate. Mr. Wilson, indeed, suggested just this. "One cannot object in principle to any of Faulkner's practices," he wrote in his review, "to his shifting his syntax in the middle of a sentence, to his stringing long sequences of clauses together with practically no syntax at all, to his inserting in parenthesis in the middle of a scene (in one case, in the middle of a sentence) a long episode that took place at some other time, to his invention of the punctuation (()) to indicate a parenthesis within a parenthesis, or to

(Please turn to page 4)

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On April 8 the New York Times reported that Dr. Allen O. Whipple, speaking at a conference in Tuskegee, had urged that medical students give more attention to literature.

"More is to be learned," he declared, "from the character portrayals of Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello and King Lear, or from the stories of Moses, Isaac, Joseph, Job, David and Hosea, than by studying mice in a maze."

He added that "There is a great deal more to modern surgery than cutting and sewing. You must heal not only the tissues, but the individual as a whole, mentally and physically."

Burges-Johnson-Philosophy

What we need is an incarnation of Burges Johnson from which that old traditional early study of grammar would be excluded. With this we could prove whether he is telling us the truth which he is so sure he is telling.

(The idea of the comparison of two editions — depending on the start — of a single being first occurred to me when Winston Churchill remarked that his Latin was of no utility to his English.)

As for creating vocabulary-mindedness in college students by making them write poetry, angels and ministers of grace defend us! How could a sorrier plight be produced for a sensitive instructor?

I am having a great deal of trouble with my course in Burges-Johnson-Philosophy.

A. M. Withers
Athens, W. Va.

Sense of History Needed

The article by Ralph B. Long on Trager-Smith linguistics (March, 1957 Critic) was excellent. This kind of discussion has been badly needed, and in presenting it The Critic performed a valuable service.

In an earlier issue, in December, the "Notes on the English Language" by Archibald Hill seemed to be given official editorial sanction by the introductory comment. I don't quarrel with the assertion that the new linguistics is a valuable behaviorial science, but I thought it unfortunate that this should be coupled with a denial of the value of Old English.

Teachers, like other educated people, need a sense of history in order to deal wisely with the present. They need the history of the language, including Old English, along with scientific analysis of the language of today. It will be a pity, I think, if the Language Committee of the CEA sets the CEA officially against the values of historical study.

Keith Hollingsworth
Wayne State Univ.

Some unfortunate errors occurred in Robert P. Stockwell's article on Trager-Smith Linguistics in the May, 1957 Critic, all of them typographical and not to be blamed on the author. In the third line of the first column, "linguistic" should have been "linguistics"; there was a duplicate comma in the second column; in the fourth column 7th line the "for" should read "of"; in the fourth column 4th line "mechanist" was misspelled; and in the second column, third example there was a single bar where none should have been placed. In addition, the printer was unable to supply stress marks on the vowels in the examples. Our apologies to Mr. Stockwell!

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THE POETRY NOTEBOOK

I had just completed a line by line analysis of a Keats' ode, using questions and class discussion to reveal the harmony of structure and meaning. The class had been interested, the discussion lively, but at the end of the period, I felt a withdrawal in the attitude of the class, a vague yet unmistakable feeling of resentment.

The course, the second part of a year's survey of English literature, was specially designed to give the students, who had almost no experience in reading poetry, the opportunity to read a few good poems carefully, and to offer them, at the same time, some idea of literary movements since the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the semester a number of students frankly declared that poetry just didn't make any sense to them, and they doubted if any course would change their attitude. Skeptical they were, but at least they seemed willing to work with me.

Two weeks later they were just as willing and just as skeptical. I was discouraged and puzzled. Why, I had to discover, had the students felt resentful after we had completed the analysis of the ode? I thought long and painfully and finally recognized the obvious: the analysis had injured their pride, been an insult to their intelligence. Their own reading at home had failed to reveal most of the meanings we'd found during the discussion. Instead of making them poetry enthusiasts, the intensive analysis the course was designed to permit, was merely convincing the students that unless you had a Ph.D. in literature you couldn't get at the full meaning of a poem. Resentful? Why not? The questions I threw out were loaded questions: they were the incantations of the high priest, drawing into the sacred precinct the uninitiated who had been unable to enter it themselves.

Their attitude, I had to admit, was justified. I had read through most of Keats' poetry, studied his letters, read a number of biographies, gone through quite a few critical studies. My suggestions and questions were undoubtedly helpful and did assist the students in discovering much that they had missed in their own reading. But was not this well-intentioned assistance further proof that poetry was beyond them? That it was for the initiated?

My faith in intensive analysis was momentarily shaken but not my conviction that poetry could be enjoyed by students. Despite my years of study, my pleasure in a poem was derived primarily from careful reading; and I had simply to prove to the members of my class that they too had available the fare for travel "in the realms of gold"—concentration and awareness.

But how does one get students, harried with many other assignments, accustomed to cursory prose reading, to read carefully a poem that will be analyzed in class the next day anyway?

I searched my mind for a dramatic device and found one on my desk. There, lying open, was a volume of Andre Gide's Notebooks. I recalled the English school boy's Latin copybook and I had my idea.

Two days later I took the class into my confidence. I confessed that our last meeting had discouraged me, and I dumped the whole problem into their laps. Though I had not planned it, the effect, psychologically, could not have been better. Yes, they agreed that something had to be done. My diagnosis of the difficulty, however, seemed to them incorrect. Many insisted that they did read the poems carefully before coming to class. I could be wrong, I granted, but I had spent a lot of time reaching that conclusion and would they mind therefore cooperating in an experiment? What could they say? I outlined my plan: they were to buy a special notebook which they were to use only when doing their reading assignments. After reading through the poem they were to put down their initial reaction. Then, as they went through the poem again, this time reading closely, they were to jot down their impressions, the ideas that occurred to them, their reactions. These notes would form the basis of our class discussion. And finally, after the class had analyzed the poem, each student was to reread the poem alone and enter in his

(Please turn to next page)

AN ELEGY AVERTED IN A COLLEGE CLASSROOM

The buzzer puts an end to scanning notes,
The listless students wander to their seats,
The professor prods his mind for anecdotes
To see him through an anxious hour on Keats.
Now comes the task he always dreads to face,
Teaching jet-age youth the "Nightingale."
Let someone yawn or hide a wry grimace,
And song of immortal bird would not avail.
But then a lad (his race be ever blest!)
Asks what this fellow Keats was trying to say.
His question turns a task into a quest!
Art's magic casements may open wide today.

Richard F. Bauerle
Ohio Wesleyan Univ.

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Poetry Notebook

(Continued from page 3)

notebook his final impressions.

I was, I suppose, expecting some kind of miracle and the next few sessions were disappointing. But gradually the comments and observations of the brighter students became more pertinent. A few more hands, each class, were raised. My role often shifted from teacher to referee as the discussions grew livelier. Many of the comments were superficial, of course, and much class time was wasted, perhaps, when I had tactfully to point out that there really were limits to interpretation. But the feeling of resentment had disappeared, and as the semester progressed enthusiasm increased. One day I noticed, with much gratification, how frequently the biographical and historical material I provided before we read a poet was being used in the discussions.

Not all the members of the class, I realized, were keeping the notbooks, so I spurred them on by announcing that periodically I would collect the books to grade them. Throughout the semester about seventy percent honestly recorded their impressions and ideas. The rest probably stayed up one whole night desperately reading the assigned poems for some reaction to put down and carefully transferring their class notes into the special notebooks. I was satisfied. Even the poorest students recorded an occasional interesting reaction.

Going through the notebooks carefully enough to make comments here and there and getting the books back quickly was a big chore, but it was rewarding. At first most of the entries were self-conscious, forced, embarrassed. I praised each sincere statement I came across, and later on, the notebooks became for many of the students a private record of their thoughts. Into their entries filtered their problems, ambitions, hates and loves. They were not only learning to read a poem, but themselves as well. Yeats' "Leda and the Swan," for instance, provoked a bitter diatribe, in one girl's notebook, on the loss of identity a woman suffered by giving up her own name in marriage and subjecting herself to the whims of a worthless male. I later learned the girl had recently been jilted. Another student greeted an Arnold poem with a triple-spaced Bull——! and a vigorous argument against the peaceful life of nature. A surprising amount of verse appeared in the books. One boy decided that Eliot and Yeats were just as old-fashioned as the Victorians. What poetry needed, he felt, was an injection of rock 'n roll. Wielding the hypo, he produced something that sounded like a mad Voodoo chant.

The course was a success. No one griped —to me at least—about the extra work, and most of the students left the class, if not confirmed readers of poetry, at least convinced that poetry was within their scope. The following semester I started out just as I had previously, waited two weeks, took the class into my confidence—hamming it up quite effectively—and suggested the poetry notebook.

Edmond L. Volpe
The City College of New York

Faulkner's Prose

(Continued from page 1)

his creation of non-dictionary words. He has, at one time or another, justified all these devices." Unfortunately, Mr. Wilson didn't pause to say how Faulkner justified **any** of the devices, or what is more to the point, how he has justified **all** of them, that is, how he has justified his total manner. Instead he went on to criticize Faulkner in terms of negligence and, even, ignorance. On the matter of Faulkner's coinages of words, he wrote, "Faulkner is not merely coining but groping."

Close and astute reader that he is, Mr. Wilson is right in every detail, but wrong, it seems to me, in his conclusion. Like Leavis on Milton, he sees every flawed tree but misses the magnificent forest. For the coinages, the groping, the syntactical convolutions, the breaks in thought, the inaccuracies (Wilson says nothing of the lapses in plot, the changes in character persons with the same name undergo from book to book, the changes in name the same persons undergo, the occasional arbitrary handling of background details) — all these are of the essence of Faulkner's art.

Faulkner's genius is precisely **not** of the nature of Conrad's, Joyce's, or Proust's. His relationship to them through the richness of his language is superficial. Faulkner's genius is not calculated, self-conscious, mental. This is clear from the words he invents, from the very punctuation, from the sentences and paragraphs, in short, from the texture of the writing itself. Faulkner's prose is an effort to make sound and sense one, to have his sound project the atmosphere, and his subject is slippery, protean, many-levelled, self-contradictory, and confused. He is never concerned with the **idea** of the thing, but with its essence.His worst writing is often his intellectual writing, in or out of his fiction, for ideas cannot be got at as a scene can. Faulkner's talent is to catch life almost raw, not to handle thought, or to use thought to render life.

It is a mistake to go at Faulkner with the fine comb of explication. It straightens out little. It simply gets snarled by tangles and burrs just as any too rationalistic response to life is constantly brought up short by the whimsical and mysterious. The quality of Faulkner is scarcely to be found in a word or sentence, except insofar as his handling of word or sentence suggests what he is about on the larger dimension, but in the great sweep of the prose — which attempts to encompass the nature of

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people (and a people) in a setting oppressed by memory, dreams, and a present reality. His object is something that cannot be intellectualized beforehand; some of the statements that critics and reporters elicited from him about his most recent work before publication were wildly off the mark when the work appeared. His object emerges full-blown from the draft. It is inchoate until actually formed. And his work is, as we can see from the structure of the prose, always in the nature of a first draft, not to be tampered with, for the very firstness is significant of the reality pictured: this is how the thing is without shaping and correction. Faulkner is himself, always, part of the scene he is establishing in all of its rude vitality; he cannot be detached, self-possessed, and omniscient.

If Faulkner is to be classed with writers like him in intention, Lawrence, Byron, Dylan Thomas, Baudelaire would be more appropriate and suggestive than Conrad, Joyce, or Proust. Mr. Wilson himself hinted at this. After describing Faulkner as inferior to Joyce, Proust and Conrad in discipline, he wrote: "Faulkner, it must be said, often succeeds as Shakespeare does — by plunging into the dramatic scene and flinging down the words and images that flow to the ends of his fingers." It seems plain that Faulkner would never have succeeded as Shakespeare did, immersing himself in the subject, if he kept his wits about him and strictly attended to syntax, dictionary meanings, and freshman mechanics. Shakespeare's "lapses" may have made him a less "perfect" writer than Milton, who rarely lapsed from Mr. Wilson's standards, but they did not make Shakespeare a "lesser" writer than Milton. If Faulkner had not written so much so badly, he certainly would not have written so much so well.

But I would not put it that we must take the good with the bad. I submit that the so-called "bad" is part of the good, often necessary to it. Consider, for instance, how much of the "legendary" import of **Absalom, Absalom!** would have been lost through merciless pruning and polishing. And I think we can get the full character of Faulkner's art only by a close study of the prose, not in terms of an ideal of mechanical perfection, or on any basis of comparison with the prose of Conrad, Joyce, or Proust, but in relation to the final sense of each novel, even in relation to the sense of the total body of his work. This is not to say that we will never find Faulkner less than perfect. Like Shakespeare and Lawrence, he failed often, sometimes grandly, sometimes meanly. But looking at Faulkner's prose in the depth and breadth of his work should enable us to understand better the integral linking of his sound with his sense.

Morris Freedman
University of New Mexico

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Increasing Enrollment

(Continued from page 1)

Texas had less than twenty-four semester hours credit in English, and in face of the fact that our college has for many years produced more public school teachers than any other institution in the state. The crop of graduates in the College of Arts and Sciences, a few of whom would become teachers, was equally lean at this period. Indeed, the low point was reached in 1953, when only thirteen bachelors of arts with majors in English were graduated from the college.

A Five-Year Program

It is obvious why, then, our English department unanimously decided during the first semester of the 1952-53 session that all the steps which we were resourceful or energetic enough to take in order to increase advanced enrollment should be taken.

The results of a five-year program undertaken at that time have now become evident and appear to us worthy of report. While the college enrollment has increased by thirty-nine per cent to 6,185 in the fall of 1956, enrollment in advanced and graduate English has increased sixty-five per cent. The advanced and graduate enrollment in the first summer term of 1957 is greater than the enrollment for both terms in the summer of 1952-53. The number of graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences who major in English has increaseed from thirteen in 1953 to twenty-eight in 1956 and will probably total thirty-five in 1957. Enrollment in the course in methods of teaching high school English has increased from twenty-seven then to fifty-seven in the current year. The number of English majors during the 1956-57 regular session was more than two hundred with about half of these on junior-senior level. Fall enrollment in 1956 had risen to 317, and in the spring of 1957, there were eighteen sections of advanced courses with an average of eighteen students per section.

Administrative Changes

This increase may not be attributed to any single change in policy or any single panacea. Steps that were taken involved three major changes in departmental operation. First, certain administrative changes were made. All conflicts in hours among advanced courses were eliminated, and the

(Please turn to next page)

Increasing Enrollment

(Continued from page 5)

advanced offering was balanced between morning and afternoon classes and between Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes and Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday classes. Full professors were no longer asked which hours they liked, and a scheduling committee relieved the departmental director of individual onus in removing courses from customary hours.

Also, we scheduled an advanced course at night for the convenience of townspeople and commuters. Certain courses of limited appeal were scheduled in alternate years, but all courses which we did not actually intend to offer were eliminated from the college catalog. We had had an honor section in freshman English for some years, but we now expanded the honors section program to four sections and eventually to five, with favorable results in attracting new majors.

Conferences with Students

These administrative changes were perhaps relatively minor in their effect. Far more important was a decision to ask every teacher of required English to use one fifteen-minute conference period, or as much thereof as necessary, to talk with each student about his intellectual and vocational interests. Since we teach twelve hours of required courses in the English department, we have an opportunity in this way to advise undecided students that we feel that they have the ability to major in English, if they do.

It must be admitted also that some of our more enthusiastic teachers feel no qualms about leading a freshman to switch his major to English. Furthermore, we no longer restrict our blandishments to the A or B+ student. Our counsellors are not afraid to advise the B- and C+ student in freshman English to pursue his study of English, especially of he wishes to prepare to teach. It had finally dawned upon us that he would probably teach English anyway, since English classes had to be manned, but that if he did not major in English he would teach English without such preparation as we could give him. This intensive counselling has certainly been a large factor in increasing enrollment, but perhaps not the major factor.

Selling the Department

Our most productive effort has been put into what might be called selling the department and its courses of study. The committee on advanced and graduate courses prepared for wide distribution a prospectus descriptive of the courses in the following semester or summer.

These were not objective catalog descriptions but notes designed to pique the interest of the curious undergraduate. The members of the English department also began to make a loosely organized effort to become personally acquainted with English majors through English majors meetings and through invitations to groups of majors to visit in their homes. A large section of unused exhibit case space, once used for college athletic trophies, is now decorated regularly by a committee of the English department to arouse interest in some aspect of departmental activities. A college-wide contest in writing was publicized, awards were made at the annual Honors Day, and names of winners were engraved on a permanent plaque.

Vocational Opportunities

These selling efforts were, however, not so important as the actual selling of vocational possibilities, not only to students but to members of the department themselves, who often did not realize the great variety of callings for which the English major may be fitted. After several years of intensive but informal work in publicizing vocational opportunities, a departmental committee produced an extensive booklet entitled **Opportunities for English Majors.** This publication has been and is being distributed widely among freshmen and sophomores, and has found its way, we hope, into every section of every dormitory and rooming house on the campus. It is tailored to fit the particular needs of this institution and contains actual courses of study possible under local regulations.

Excellent Teaching

Along with all this organized effort, we still believe that our greatest ally, in the long run, must be successful teaching on the freshman and sophomore levels, so that the desire to read and study language and literature will actually be present in the upperclassmen. In pursuit of this objective, we have worked especially on the literature courses at sophomore level.

Then, when a student of even mediocre ability indicates a particular liking for a certain type or period of literature the instructor is able to recommend an advanced course which will enable him to pursue his

Recommended as supplementary text for the teacher in Liberal Arts.

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by A. M. SULLIVAN

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FALL MEETINGS

Virginia-North Carolina-West Virginia

October 26 at Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, Virginia. Guest speakers will be Dean Thomas Clark Pollock of NYU who will talk on "Closed Circuit TV and English Teaching" and Prof. Harry R. Warfel of the Univ. of Florida who will talk on "Grammar Not Vocabulary Makes Literature."

Prof. John B. Hamilton of Appalachian State Teachers College and Prof. Dora Jean Ashe of Lynchburg College will report on "Literature in the Freshman Course" and Prof. Marvin Peddy of Washington and Lee Univ. will lead a discussion of "Utilizing More Efficiently Teaching Resources in English."

New England CEA

October 26 at American International College in Springfield, Mass. Guest speaker will be Prof. Lionel Trilling of Columbia Univ. who will discuss the reasons for the diminishing prestige of English literature.

Michigan CEA

Saturday, Nov. 9, at Olivet College

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interest. In this way many students who are neither majors nor minors in English are happy to take advanced English as free elective. Even more students would be gained for advanced work if the various vocational programs in the schools of business, music, and home economics permitted more free electives. As it is, some thirty enrollees each year are in this category.

English departments in other institutions, we believe, may be interested in our program both because it has succeeded in a modest but substantial way and because it has not involved winning any concessions in college-wide policy, in requirements for graduation, or from other departments. At the same time, we realize full well that we have done nothing that has not been done in many other English departments.

We are happy to confess that we have done it all with our little committees.

Garrett Ballard
North Texas State College

Indiana CEA Spring Meeting

The twenty-second annual meeting of the Indiana CEA was held at Indiana University May 17-18. The chief speaker was David Daiches of Cambridge University who took as his subject "English as a Liberal Art." In the opening session John W. Harrison of Purdue spoke on "Myth and Imagery in Byron's Manfred"; Walter G. Friedrich of Valparaiso spoke on "Spenser's Feminine Christ"; and Alvan S. Ryan of Notre Dame spoke on "Arnold's Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse."

Saturday morning there were two panel discussions, one on "The Findings of the CCCC" and the other on "Today's Ideal English Major." At the business meeting Hazel Butz of Taylor was elected president and Alvan Ryan of Notre Dame was elected vice-president.

Five New English Titles from the Borzoi List

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by ROBERT O. BOWEN, *Montana State University*

The Major Critics
by CHARLES S. HOLMES, EDWIN FUSSELL, and RAY FRAZER
Pomona College & Claremont Graduate School

Logic and Language
by BERNARD F. HUPPE and HARRY R. KAMINSKY *Harpur College*

American English in Its Cultural Setting
by DONALD J. LLOYD, *Wayne University* HARRY R. WARFEL, *University of Florida*

Literary Criticism: A Short History
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Mich. CEA Spring Meeting

Eighty-three persons attended the spring meeting of the Michigan CEA on May 4 at Albion College. In the morning a panel of six speakers described ways of killing the introductory literature course. There was general agreement that a little effort expended on giving students material wholly foreign to them, giving them no aid, using graduate seminar methods with freshmen and texts prepared with no mercy for the students, all combined with ridicule of the student, would be ninety percent effective in destroying student interest.

The committee on certification then reported to the membership. Vern Wagner (Wayne) presented a resolution which was voted to recommend to the State Advisory Committee on Certification that the present requirement of one major and two minors be changed; that the requirement should be for one major of 30 hours and one minor of 24 hours, both exclusive of freshman level courses that all students are required to take. Fields of study for the major and minor were also indicated in the resolution (composition, language, literature) to emphasize the importance of proper training of the teacher in his field.

At the business meeting Ralph Miller (Western Mich. Univ.) was elected president; Herbert Schueller (Wayne State) vice-president; Margaret Dempster (Henry Ford Community College) sect.-treasurer. Directors were James Newcomer (Olivet); Sister Mary Aquin, (Aquinas); Florence Kirk (Alma). Board of Control was Russel Thomas (Northern Mich. College); William Colburn(Central Mich. College); Erle Leichty (Mich. State Univ.)

Ralph Miller (WMU) spoke briefly on the Humanities Conference at Cleveland and on the general topic "Whither Mich. CEA?" Margaret Dempster (Ford Community College) discussed a questionnaire prepared by her committee on junior colleges and community colleges in Michigan. William Steinhoff (UM) pointed out a number of areas which merit added study by Mich. CEA. The broad range of student abilities, the variation of emphasis in different colleges, the frequency of remedial programs were topics he mentioned.

Eugene Grewe (Univ. of Detroit) presented a detailed "Survey of the Major and Minor Programs in the Colleges and Universities of Michigan." This contained a comprehensive analysis of varient class hours and course titles required for the English major. It became evident that considerably more of value might accrue from further investigations of this sort.

John Virtue (EMC) recommended that the secretary be instructed to send copies of the two reports to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and to the Chairman of the current eacher Certification Code Committee.

Keith J. Fennimore

Arthur S. Trace, Jr.'s article "The Case for Abolishing Freshman Composition" in the February, 1957 **CEA Critic** is summarized at length in the discussion of magazine articles in the May issue of the **Chicago Schools Journal.**

Ellsworth Barnard's article "Let's Talk—and Teach—Sense about Grammar" which appeared in the New York Times Magazine under the title "Good Grammar Ain't Good Usage" was reprinted in **The English Leaflet,** publication of the New England Association of Teachers of English.

Levette J. Davidson, Chairman of the English Department at the University of Denver and president of the Rocky Mountain CEA, died in May, 1957. He had been on the national board of directors of CEA and was at one time a vice president.

Misprint?

According to the New York **Times** for July 18, the American Council of Learned Societies is "a federation of twenty-five national organizations devoted to discouragement of humanistic studies."

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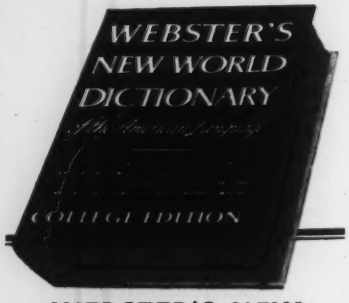

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